

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USCINCSO

UNCLAS STATE 085406

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOGRM, MDOL, CU, UR, POL

SUBJECT: SOVIET PILOTS IN CUBA

THE FOLLOWING ARE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S COMMENT ON
APRIL 7 IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING PRESENCE OF
SOVIET PILOTS IN CUBA:

Q. THE PENTAGON ACKNOWLEDGED YESTERDAY THAT IT HAS REPORTS
THAT TWENTY SOVIET PILOTS ARE FLYING MIG'S IN CUBA. TWO
QUESTIONS; DOES THIS REPRESENT ANY SIGNIFICANT VARIATION
IN THE HABIT OF ACTIVITIES THERE? AND, SECONDLY DOES THE
UNITED STATES TAKE EXCEPTION TO THIS?

A. FIRST, I MAY BE WRONG, BUT I WAS NOT AWARE THAT THE
DEFENSE DEPARTMENT WAS CONFIRMING A SPECIFIC NUMBER. I
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WAS INFORMED THAT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HAD

SAID THAT WE WERE AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET PILOTS IN CUBA. THERE HAVE BEEN SOVIET MILITARY ADVISERS, AND I ASSUME THAT IS INCLUDING PILOTS IN CUBA OVER THE PAST YEARS, WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CLOSE SOVIET-CUBAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT. SO, I DO NOT THINK, ON THE BASIS

OF THESE REPORTS, WE ATTACH ANY SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS MOST RECENT REPORT.

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN COMBAT PILOTS THERE BEFORE?

A. I AM NOT SURE. CERTAINLY THE CUBAN AIR FORCE HAS BEEN TRAINED BY THE SOVIETS. KISSINGER

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